Indian National Returned from Kuwait

2675. SHRI G. PARATHAPA-REDDY:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMA-CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken to redress the grievances of Indian nationals who were working in Kuwait during the Gulf war and whose monetary assets are still lying in Kuwait;

(b) how many such persons are there and what is their reported amount still lying in Kuwait; and

(c) what are the details of their grievances which are proposed to redressed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) The Government have taken a number of steps to alleviate the grievances of Indian national with assets still lying in Kuwait since the Gulf crisis. These include execuion of a power of attorney, assistance by our Embassy in Kuwait and establishment of a Special Kuwait Cell for facilitating the filing of claims with the United Nations Compensation Commission, Geneva.

(b) The Special Kuwait Cell has registered about 152,000 compensation claims. Governments have no information regarding the amount still lying in Kuwait.

(c) Redressal of grievances would depend on the evaluation of the claims by, and availability of funds with, the United Nations Compensation Commission.

Delay in issuing of passports

2676. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how much time is taken by Regional Passport Office, Delhi to issue a passport to an applicant;

(b) whether the receipt of police reports after long time by the R.P.O., Delhi, is one of the reasons for delay;

(c) whether any cases of loss of police reports after their receipt in the said office have also come to notice;

(d) whether it is also a fact that recently there have been complaints about the issuance of such passports where the expiry dates marked on the passports happened to be earlier than the issuing dates; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and what procedure is adopted for correcting such passports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) In the normal course it takes 55 to 60 days to issue a passport at Regional Passport Office, Delhi.

(b) and (c) No Sir.

(d) and (e) No such complaint has come to Government's notice. It is however, possible that clerical errors of this nature might occur, in which case the passport office concerned would correct the entry when the matter is brought to its attention.

Streamline the process of issuing pasport

2677. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI BHUBANESHWAR KALITA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to further simplify and streamline the process of applying for passports and issue thereof; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b)

Yes, Sir. The Government is formulating the details of proposals designed to further streamline and simplify passport services with a view to increasing productivity and reducing delays.

भारत-अमरीका संबंध

2678. **श्री सोम पाल** : क्या विदेशमंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका में नया राष्ट्रपति चुने जाने के बाद भारत-अमरीका संबंधों को प्रगाढ़ बनाने के लिए सरकार द्वारा उठाये गये कदमों का ब्यौरा क्या है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री दिनेश सिंह) : सरकार भारत-अमरीकी संबंधों में हो रहे सुधार को बहुत उच्च प्राथमिकता देती है और नए अमरीकी प्रशासन के साथ विभिन्न स्तरों पर सम्पर्क स्थापित किए गए हैं। सरकार का प्रस्ताव है कि नए अमरीकी प्रशासन के साथ पारस्परिक कार्यकलापों को बढ़ाया जाए ताकि द्विपक्षीय संबंध, विशेष रूप से परस्पर हित चिन्ता के क्षेत्रों में, और अधिक सुदृढ़ हो सकें।

भारत-अमरीकी संबंध बहु-आयामी हैं। हालांकि अमरीका के साथ इस समय चल रही हमारी बातचीत में कई क्षेत्र शामिल हैं, लेकिन सरकार आर्थिक एवं वाणिज्यिक क्षेत्रों में मौजूद संभावनाओं को विशेष महत्व देती है।

Character Certificates required for passports

2679. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the applicants for passports are required to submit a certificate of character certified by a gazetted officer;

(b) whether it is also a fact that such certificates issued and signed by Members of Parliament are not acceptable to passport offices;

(c) if so, what is the rationnale thereof; and

(d) if not, whether Government propose to issue instructions to the regional passport offices accordingly and also publicise these for public knowledge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) No Sir. A Verification Certificate is an optional document which may be attached by any applicant if he so chooses.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Government have considered the proposal for reintroduction of the system authorising the Members of Parliament to sign Verification Certificates for applicants. During recent Debates in Parliament, there was strong opposition to the proposal from large sections of Hon'ble Members. In view of this, Government have decided that Central and State Legislators would not be authorised to sign Verification Certificates.

(d) Does not arise.

Admission to Indian students in commonwealth countries

2680. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have warned the Indian Students not to seek direct admission to the educational institutions in countries of Commonwealth of Independent States;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government of India had issued three advisory notices in February, July and November, 1992, informing all concerned that following the dissolution of former USSR, changes